

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed June 29, 2004, the examiner rejected applicant's claims 1, 2 6, 7 and 19 for alleged anticipation in view of the cited Transgrud reference, U.S. Patent 6,347,781. Claims 3-5, 8-18 and 20-31 were indicated to recite allowable subject matter, and claims 32-40 were allowed. In addition, the examiner noted a minor typographical error appearing in line 3 of independent claims 19 and 32.

In response, applicant has edited line 3 of independent claims 19 and 32 to resolve the typographical error.

In addition, by this Response, applicant has amended independent claim 1 to incorporate the limitations from related and now-canceled dependent claim 3, wherein claim 3 was indicated by the examiner to recite allowable subject matter. Dependent claim 4 has been edited for proper conformance with parent claim 1 as now presented. Also, original dependent claims 8, 9, 12 and 17 have been re-written in independent form, wherein each of these claims was also indicated by the examiner to recite allowable subject matter. With these revisions, claims 1-2 and 4-18 as now presented are respectfully submitted to be in proper condition for allowance.

Independent claim 19 has been edited to incorporate the limitations from related and now-canceled dependent claim 20, wherein claim 20 was indicated by the examiner to recite allowable subject matter. Related dependent claims 21-31 remain in the application, wherein claims 21-22, 25-26 and 30 have been edited for proper consistency with parent claim 19 as now presented. With these revisions, claims 19 and 21-31 as now written are also submitted to be in proper condition for allowance.

Conclusion

As now presented, claims 1-2, 4-19 and 21-40 are respectfully resubmitted for reconsideration and allowance. A formal Notice of Allowance is believed to be in order and is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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